

RESTORATION OF THE ARDSLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

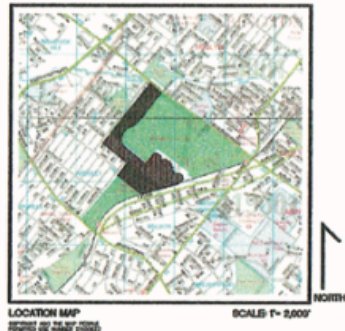
Update and Proposal
May 4, 2020



Contact: Rita Stevens, Chair, Abington Shade Tree Commision
abingtontrees@gmail.com

Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary WOODLAND ANALYSIS PLAN

ThinkGreen
Landscape Architecture, Ecological Design & Construction
April 2020

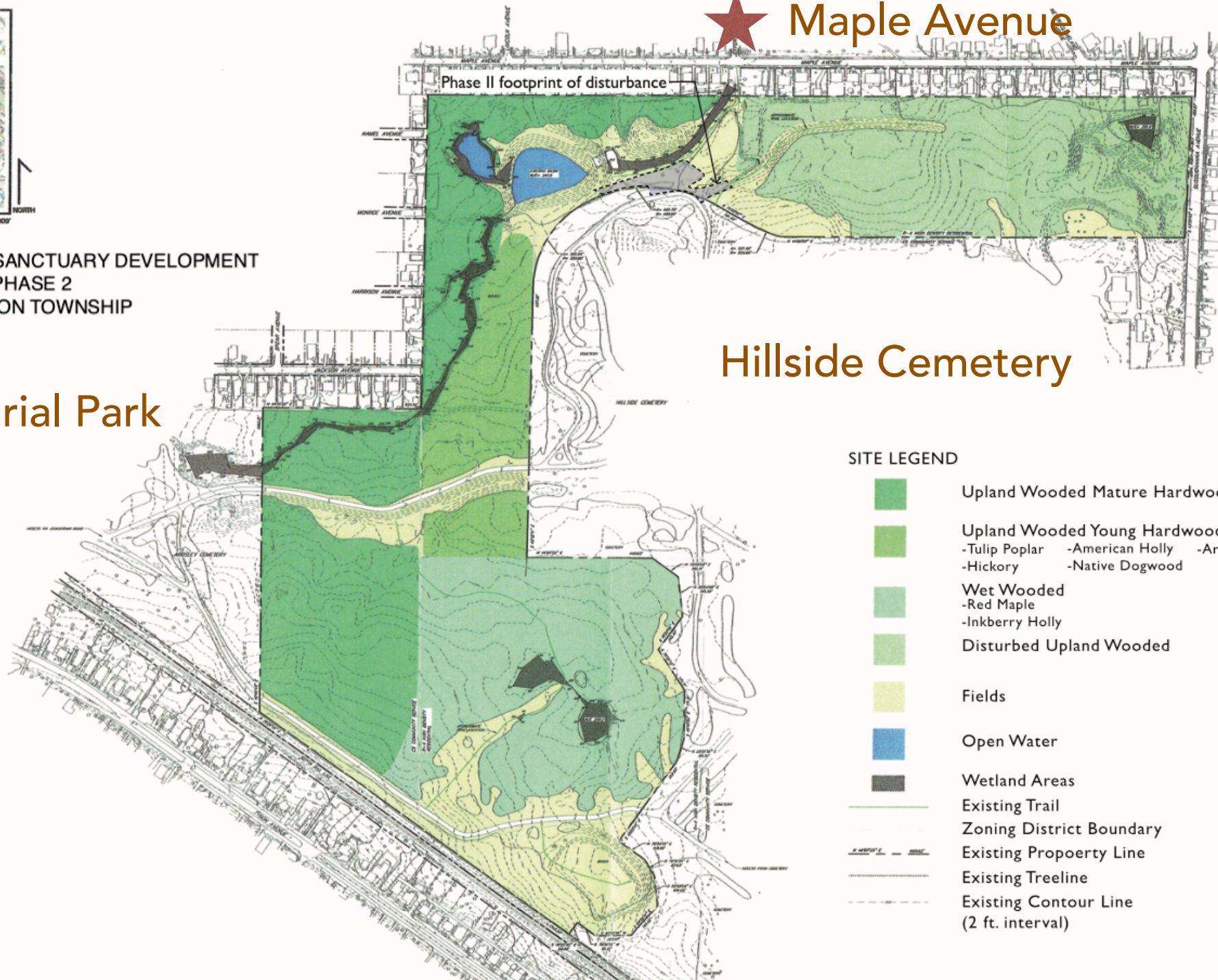


ARDSLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY DEVELOPMENT
PHASE 2
ABINGTON TOWNSHIP

Ardsley Burial Park

★ Maple Avenue

Hillside Cemetery



SITE LEGEND

- Upland Wooded Mature Hardwood
- Upland Wooded Young Hardwood
 - Tulip Poplar -American Holly -Arrowwood Viburnum
 - Hickory -Native Dogwood
- Wet Wooded
 - Red Maple
 - Inkberry Holly
- Disturbed Upland Wooded
- Fields
- Open Water
- Wetland Areas
- Existing Trail
- Zoning District Boundary
- Existing Property Line
- Existing Treeline
- Existing Contour Line (2 ft. interval)

THIS MAP WAS ORIGINALLY PRODUCED BY LAND CONCEPTS FOR THE 2008 ARDSLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN AND HAS BEEN UPDATED BY THINKGREEN LLC TO INCLUDE PHASE I, COMPLETED IN 2019.

GENERAL NOTES:

DATE MAP SOURCE:
FIELD SURVEY PERFORMED BY TRACY LARSON SERVICES, INC. (TLC) ON 08/14/2019. PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY ARDSLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY. AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY, MAY 2019.
WETLANDS:
BASED ON FIELD SURVEY PERFORMED BY GREAT VALLEY ENVIRONMENTAL, 2007

TODAY'S AGENDA

ARDSLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

A. County and Township Priorities

B. Phase 1 Restoration (complete)

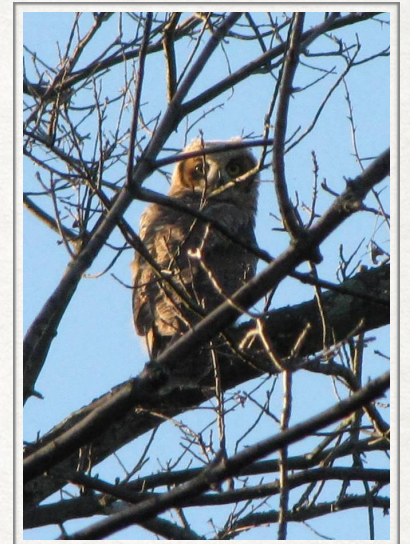
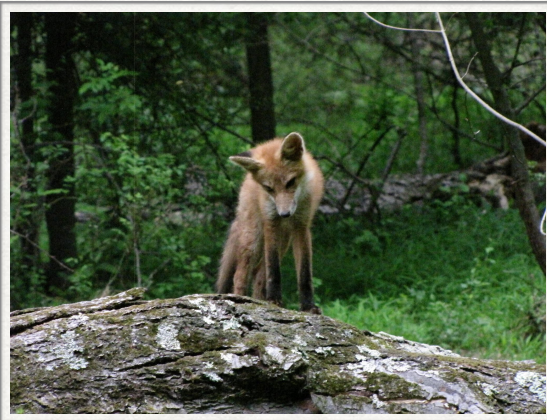
C. Phase 2 Restoration (proposed)

1. Project Goals

2. Preliminary Design

3. Needs, Benefits and Urgencies

4. Budget and Resources



REGIONAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES

ARDSLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

THREE KEY PLANS

- **Montco 2040**

The Comprehensive Plan for Montgomery County

- Connected Communities- Sandy Run greenway
- Sustainable Places- Improve stormwater management
- Sustainable places- conserve natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas
- Open Space Preservation Areas- specifically lists AWS

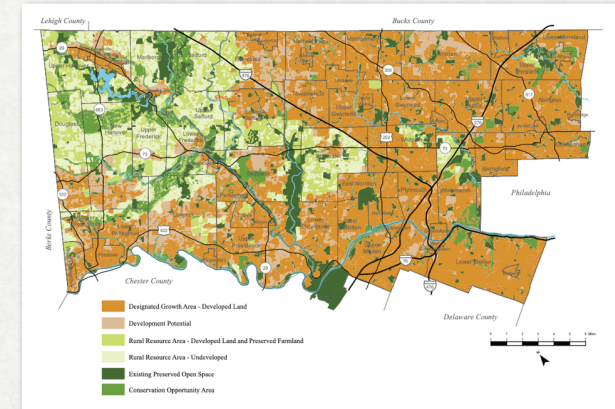
- **Abington Township Open Space and Recreation Plan**

- AWS listed as a "first priority for conservation"
- Goal: dedicate part of AWS for Briar Bush Nature Center
- Goal: continue to build trails within AWS

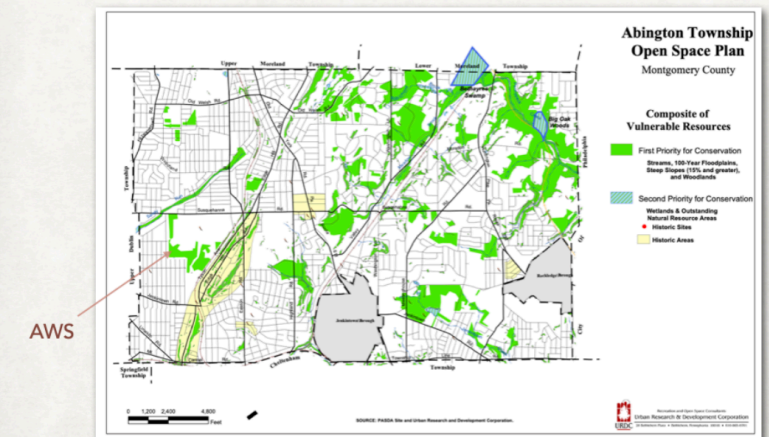
- **AWS Land Management Plan**

- Proposed project addresses the highest restoration priorities- reforestation, water quality, wildlife diversity, education, access and funding
- AWS serves ~27,000 residents who live within 1 mile of the combined sanctuary and cemetery grounds

OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION PRIORITY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, GREENWAY PRESERVATION AND OUTDOOR RECREATION



VULNERABLE RESOURCE AWS IS A FIRST PRIORITY FOR CONSERVATION SURROUNDED BY RESIDENTS WITH LOW TREE COVERAGE



ARDSLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

ACCESSIBLE TRAIL AND REFORESTATION COMPLETED IN 2019

The trail enables residents to walk from Maple Avenue up to a view of a large meadow and then continue into the Hillside Cemetery.



ARDSLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

CONNECTION WITH HILLSIDE CEMETERY

From the bench, visitors enjoy provides a view of a large meadow. The informal trail provides access to 165 acres of cemetery grounds



ARDSLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

RESTORATION PRIORITIES (PHASE 2)

View from the cemetery road



remove and manage
invasive plants

add ADA trail and
educational features

improve
habitat

manage stormwater
+ soil erosion

ARDSLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

RESTORATION PRIORITIES (PHASE 2)

View from the spillway



neighborhood
connections

ADA accessibility

habitat and educational
enhancements

ARDSLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

PHASE 2 RESTORATION GOALS

Continue restoration of the Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary,
balancing the needs of

PUBLIC ACCESS, CRITICAL HABITAT AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The proposed project will:

- extend the existing ADA accessible walking path to connect with the upper pond area
- address existing erosive runoff through incorporation of vegetated swales
- remove and manage reemergence of invasive plant material
- restore habitats including woodlands, meadows and riparian
- create outdoor educational spaces - observation spots and interpretive signage featuring a range of habitats and natural storm water management features

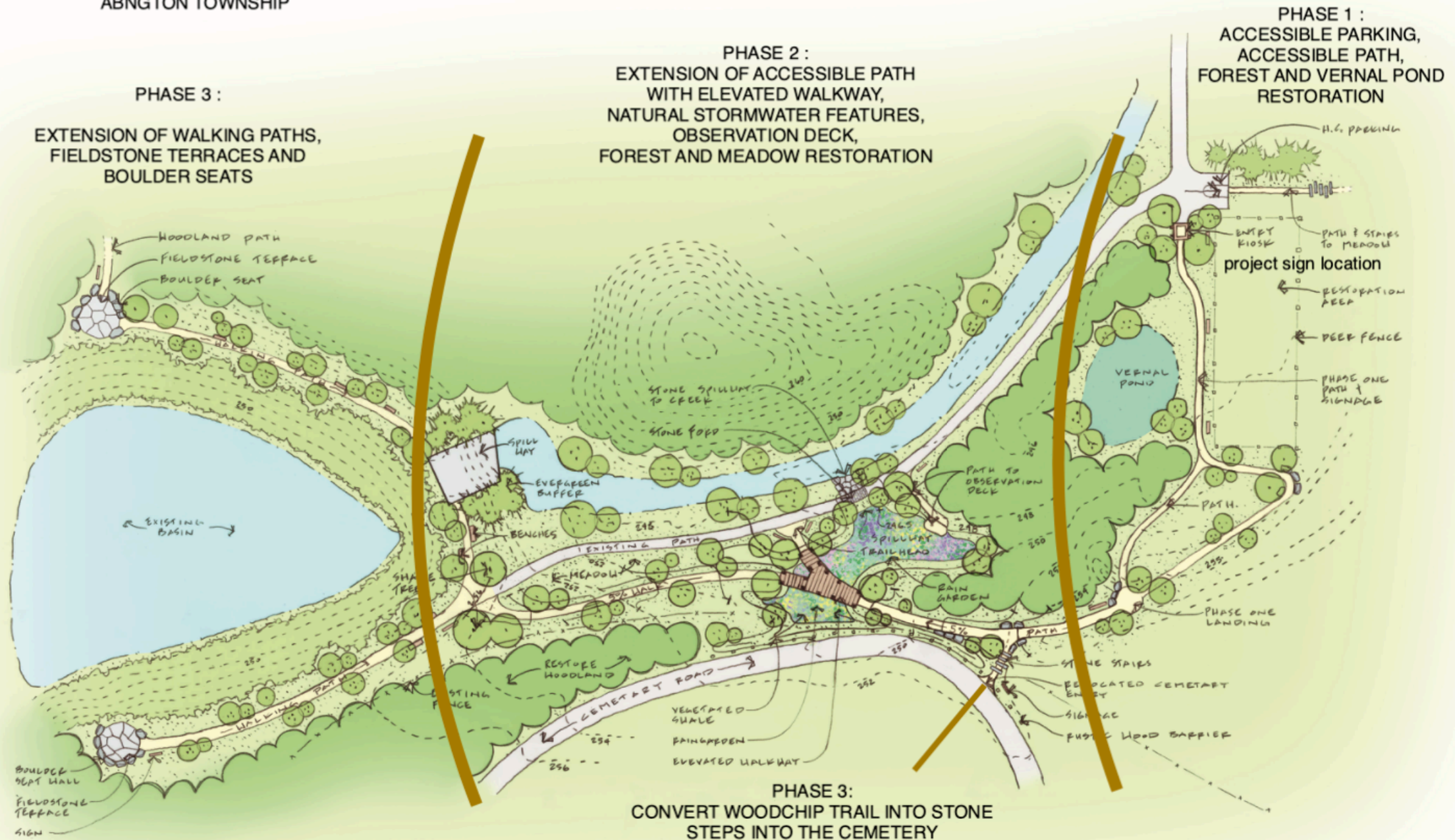
THE BIG PICTURE: AWS RESTORATION

Ardsey Wildlife Sanctuary CONCEPT GRADING PLAN

ThinkGreen
Landscape Architecture, Ecological Design & Construction
April 2020



ARDSLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY DEVELOPMENT
PHASE 2
ABNGTON TOWNSHIP



0' 25' 50' 100'

Ardsey Wildlife Sanctuary CONCEPT RENDERED PERSPECTIVE

 **ThinkGreen**
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ARDSLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY DEVELOPMENT. PHASE 2. ABNGTON TOWNSHIP



NEEDS

addressed by restoration of the Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary

Connecting People to Nature

The 245 acres of combined sanctuary and cemetery land lie within 1 mile of approximately 27,000 residents, and provides a unique woodland experience in the center of a highly developed area.

Equity

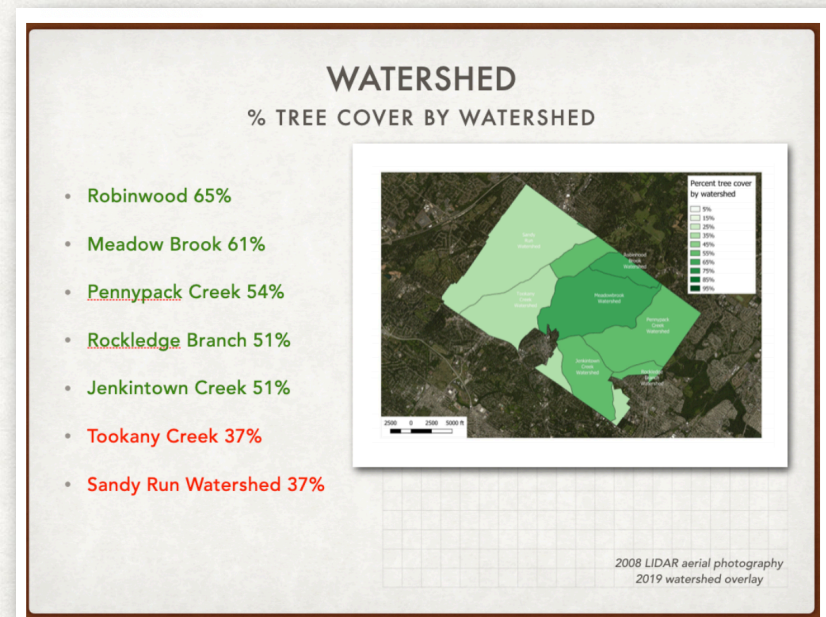
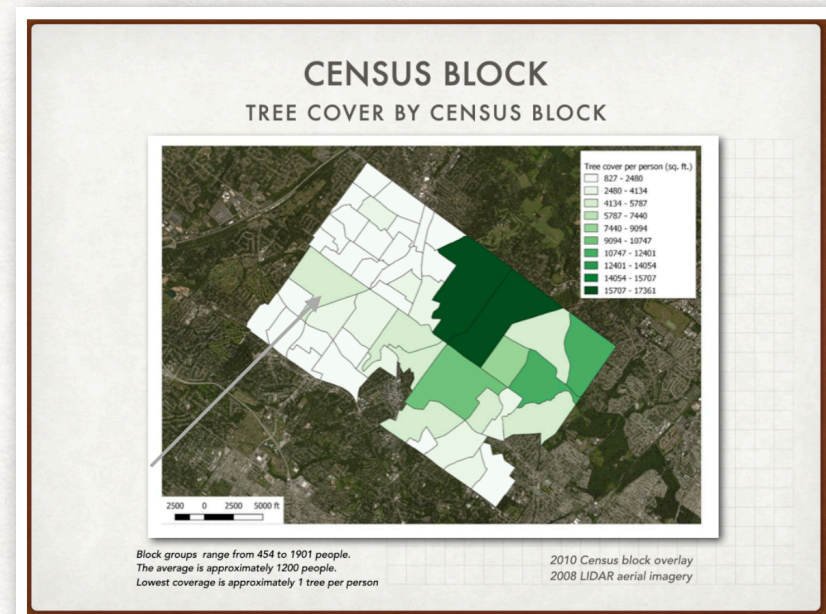
Residential properties in the vicinity of AWS are underserved by trees. Canopy coverage per person is approximately 1/7 that of the most highly served population

Clean Water

AWS lies within the Sandy Run watershed and is close to the headwaters. This watershed is a high priority for conservation. Trees and meadows are the most cost effective remedies.

Stormwater Management

The AWS is a central feature of the Township stormwater management approach for the Sandy Run watershed. The project area experiences concentrated stormwater flows and contributes significant sediment load to the Sandy Run Creek.



Figures generated by USDA Forester Jason Henning
as part of the Abington Township UTC Analysis

MEASURABLE BENEFITS

of restoring the Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary: an enormous return on investment

Environmental

AWS provides a natural buffer between human activities and water supplies, and the project area is largely riparian in nature. Restoration will measurably mitigate flooding, clean water, clean air and increase biodiversity. Further, the project will provide educational spaces necessary to expand Briar Bush Nature Center and school programs.

Health and Recreation

A big open space right in the neighborhood enables residents to get outside on a daily basis in a natural world, to take a walk or a bike ride, to view birds and other wildlife, and to nurture a sense of well being. This contributes to measurable health benefits and decreased costs associated with diabetes, obesity and many other medical conditions. Restoration will provide an accessible trail and a variety of natural habitats, including the large pond, which is currently accessible only by a steep grade.

Property Values

Proximity to a large open space has been shown to contribute 5.4% to the value of homes within 1/2 mile, which in turns generates additional tax revenue for the County, Township and School District. More than ~16,000 residents lie within 1/2 mile of the combined sanctuary and adjacent cemetery grounds.

Community

The AWS connects neighbors with neighbors, informally and more formally through the growing Friends group who volunteer to steward this land. Restoration will complete the ADA accessible trail to include the big pond and trails to neighborhoods south of Jenkintown Road and provide direct access to the adjoining historic Hillside Cemetery, where many loved ones lie.



**Mother Nature's filter
and sponge.**



**A walk a day keeps the
doctor away.**

Photo Credit: Return on the Environment
Chester County PA

URGENCIES

Why do this project now?

Our Natural Resources

Abington is experiencing an unsustainable loss of canopy, and increased vegetation in the Sandy Run headwaters is crucial to water quality.

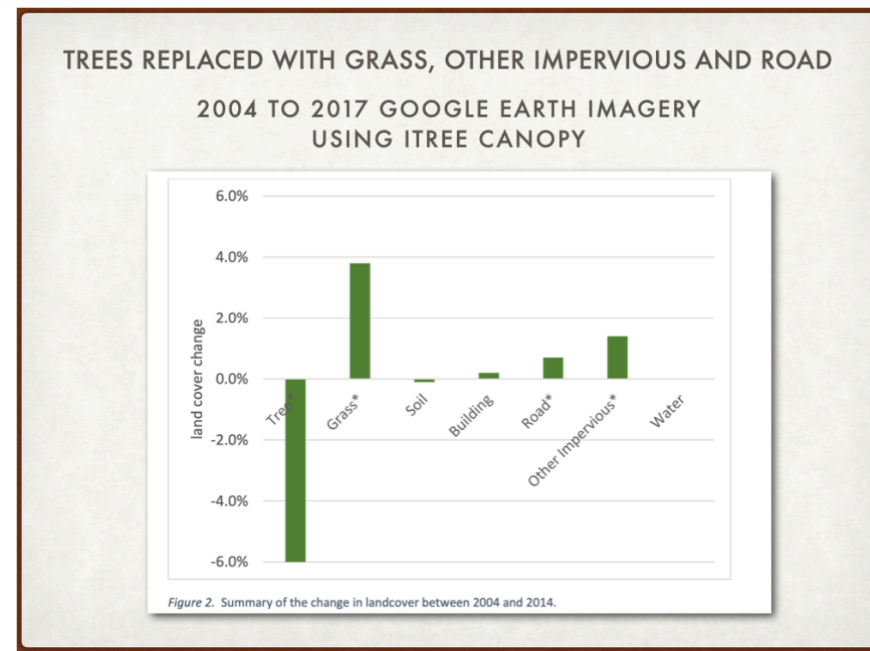
Our Health

Connecting people with nature, along with clean air and water, are essential to public and individual health, now more than ever.

Project Momentum

We have the knowledge, the determination, the partners and a high potential for funding to complete the job.

"The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago.
The second best time is now."



Estimates by USDA Forester Jason Henning as part of the Abington Township UTC Analysis



AWS Restoration Phase 1



DCNR Park Rehabilitation and Development Grant Proposal

BUDGET

	Phase One actual	Phase Two estimate
Total Cost	\$92,039	\$230,150
	DCNR: \$40,000 Match: \$52,039 Township: \$26,669 cash + \$12,876 in-kind Cash donations: \$3,600 Volunteer goods and services: \$8,894	DCNR: \$115,075 Match: \$115,075 Township: \$67,635 cash + \$37,000 in-kind Cash donations: \$5,400 Volunteer goods and services: \$5,040
Grant Period	2017- 2020	2021- 2024
Construction Timeline	2019 - 2020	2022-2023

Phase Two Notes:

- Preparation of site development drawings and associated opinion of cost was funded per the approved 2020 Township operating budget, and has been completed by Think Green LLC.
- Unique challenges with trail layout and stormwater management.
- Unique opportunities for outdoor recreation and education.
- Applied for DCNR grant on April 22, 2020.



POTENTIAL PARTNERS

MANY ARE READY TO LEND A HAND



Technical Expertise

Supplies
Plant Materials

Watering & Workdays

Donations

Sponsored Events

Partners make it happen!

Local Community Groups

Abington School District
Abington Shade Tree Commission
Abington Environmental Advisory Council
Abington Township Fire Department
Ardsley Community Association

Environmental Groups

Briar Bush Nature Center
Friends of Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary
PA Certified Naturalists
PA Forest Stewards
PA Game Commission
PA Natural Heritage Program
Pennsylvania Horticulture Society
PSU- Walk in Penn's Woods
Wissahickon Trails
Wyncote Audubon Society Audubon Society

Local Business

Collins Nursery
Laurel Hill Gardens
Promark Landscaping

Corporate

Inframark LLC
StoneMor Inc.
TD Bank



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Let's Do It!